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(73) Proprietor: **Celltrace Communications Limited**
Winkfield, Berkshire SL4 4TL (GB)

(72) Inventors:
• **Michaels, Wayne David**
Winkfield, Berkshire SL4 4TL (GB)
• **Timson, Anthony Richard**
Harrow-Weald, Middlesex HA3 5LT (GB)

• **Dervan, Aden William**
Fulham, London SW6 1RD (GB)

(74) Representative: **Warren, Keith Stanley et al**
BARON & WARREN
18 South End
Kensington
London W8 5BU (GB)

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Description

This invention relates to a telecommunications system. In particular, but not exclusively, it relates to a mobile communications system such as a cellular mobile radio or telephone system.

A recent innovation in such systems has been the introduction of Subscriber Identity Modules (SIM cards). These are integrated circuit cards which can be releasably inserted into a mobile telephone and which contain in memory the subscriber's identity, i.e. his telephone number. These known SIM cards also have a memory area which can store a certain number of alphanumeric characters. The memory area facilitates the so-called Short Message Service (SMS) in which a message for a subscriber or for a specified group of subscribers can be broadcast over the air, as an advanced form of radiopaging. Messages can be received by a mobile telephone whenever it is idle or during a call. However, if a message is received which would overfill the memory area, data is held at the host station until such time as the subscriber manually clears a space for it.

US-A5 127 040 describes a method and apparatus for remotely loading repertory telephone numbers into a mobile unit. The numbers can be recalled and used later by the subscriber.

EP-A-0 459 344 describes a method of downloading and executing software in a remote terminal of a communications system.

WO-A-91/12698 discloses a mobile radio telephone having a SIM card which has been programmed only to authorise the use of certain services. Such programming takes place directly and not remotely.

Published document, *Echo des Recherches*, no. 139, 1990, pages 13-20, describes a programmable SIM card capable of storing short messages and abbreviated dial numbers in files within a SIM-based directory structure, the files including headers defining their respective read/write status.

Published document, *Mobile Radio Conference*, 1991, Valbonne (FR), pages 73-83 describes how Short Message Services are implemented within the GSM (Global System for Mobile Communications) standard.

It is an object of the invention to provide a more efficient and remotely reconfigurable SIM card.

From one aspect, the present invention consists in a telecommunications system comprising at least one host station and a plurality of subscriber units, the or each host station being operable to transmit messages to the subscriber units, and each subscriber unit having a multiplicity of fixed memory locations and means responsive to the detection of a message to store the message in a selected one of the fixed memory locations, which can be accessed from the subscriber unit when required, said memory locations being provided in an integrated circuit card or other module which is removably connected to the subscriber unit, characterised in that the or each host station is adapted to transmit a

message coded in a specific format distinguished from other message formats used in the system, and in that the module has means for distinguishing the message coded in said specific format from said other message formats, means for decoding and storing said message in a selected fixed memory location, and reading means operable to in response to the decoded message to instigate an action to be taken by the associated subscriber unit.

Thus, for example, a set of telephone numbers, each with an identifying alphanumeric tag, can be transmitted to the SIM card, allowing users easy access to commonly used services such as hotels, car hire or airline reservations. This feature is known as a Value Added Service Directory.

A message may be retrievable by the subscriber on the entry of simple, short codes into the subscriber unit, each memory location corresponding to a particular code. A message may include a telephone number and, once stored, may be able to be overwritten over the air. Preferably, the or each host station is operable to transmit a request for information stored in a subscriber unit. The information may be included in a message and it may also include information which is stored in a secure memory location, accessible only when the subscriber enters a personal identification number (PIN number). The information may include credit details relevant to the subscriber, for example, a credit card number of credit status, thus greatly facilitating credit card transactions carried out over the telephone. Using this feature of the invention, a credit account holder avoids having to dictate his account details and need only enter the mandatory PIN number.

The host station may be operable to transmit instructions to lock and/or unlock a memory location at the subscriber unit. It may be operable to transmit instructions to run a program stored in memory locations at the subscriber unit. The host station may be operable to transmit files containing functional data and/or files containing non-functional data to the subscriber unit.

The messages, requests for information and the instructions being transmitted may be in a specific format which the subscriber unit is able to distinguish from other formats. The specific format may be made secure against interception.

In a preferred embodiment, the subscriber unit comprises a mobile radio or telephone and an integrated circuit card which can be removably connected to the radiotelephone. The integrated circuit card may contain the memory locations and may contain means for distinguishing the specific format from other formats. The card may contain means for distinguishing between the messages, requests for information and instructions. The card may also contain the means for storing the messages and means for acting on the requests and instructions.

From another aspect, the invention consists in a module for controlling a subscriber unit in a telecommu-

nications system comprising at least one host station, said module being removably connectable to a transceiver of the subscriber unit and having a multiplicity of fixed memory locations, and means responsive to the detection of a message transmitted from a host station to store the message in a selected one of the fixed memory locations, characterised by means for distinguishing a message coded in a specific format from other message formats used in the system, means for decoding and storing said message in a selected fixed memory location, and reading means operable in response to the decoded message to instigate an action to be taken by the associated subscriber unit.

The module may include a directory structure within which files can be stored.

The invention is particularly applicable to global telecommunication systems in which the mobile cellular telephone networks of various countries or areas communicate using a common standard. An example of such a global system is GSM (Global System for Mobile Communications) currently operating in Europe. However the invention is not limited to global systems and would be applied to a single national cellular network or even to a fixed land-linked network.

An embodiment of the invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:-

Figure 1 shows the transmission of messages to a subscriber unit in a system according to the invention;

Figure 2 shows a process in which a subscriber unit transmits a message and requested information;

Figure 3 is a block diagram showing elements of a module shown in figures 1 and 2;

Figure 4 shows details of one of the blocks shown in figure 3; and

Figure 5 is a flowchart showing the operation of the module shown in figures 1 to 4.

Figure 1 illustrates an SMS distribution path according to the invention. In the prior art, the short messages have usually been directed to a single subscriber or a specified group of subscribers such as a sales team.

However, GSM also supports a feature known as Cell Broadcast in which messages can be sent to all the subscribers in a particular area. In the embodiment of the invention illustrated, a message consists of the telephone number of an advertiser and an alphanumeric tag to identify the advertiser.

An operator enters the message into a terminal 1. The message is then coded into a secure format known as an Embedded Command Stream (ECS) and sent via a modem 2 and a fixed line 3 to a local GSM switch 4. According to its delivery address, the message is delivered to any or all of the other switches within that network, or even across networks.

The switch 4, which in this example is in the geo-

graphical area to which the message is to be transmitted, delivers the message to a number of cellsites 5. The cellsites 5 are the base transceiver stations of the GSM network.

Each cellsite 5 then broadcasts the message to a group of transceivers or mobile telephones, hereinafter referred to as "mobiles". If Cell Broadcast is used, the group consists of all mobiles within the geographical area at the time of the broadcast.

A selected mobile 6 receiving the message transmits a confirmation of receipt back to its respective cellsite 5. From now on, until an update situation, the system will not contact this mobile 6 again.

The mobile 6 recognises the message as SMS data and passes it to a SIM card 7, which is a small self-contained microprocessor, held in a slot in the mobile 6. The SIM card 7 in turn recognises the ECS using special hardware and software and stores the message in memory in such a way that it may not be overwritten by the subscriber. Known SIM cards contain a large number of fixed memory locations in which the subscriber can store frequently dialled numbers and corresponding alphanumeric tags. The SIM card 7 of the invention stores the message in one of these locations, and then carries out a write protect operation. The locations dedicated to storing write protected messages may be designated by code numbers relating to a particular category of advertiser. Thus, for example, car hire company telephone numbers can be stored in location 01, hotel reservations in location 02 and so on.

Figure 2 shows a call placing process in which a subscriber communicates with an advertiser. The subscriber, remembering that the car hire company's number is in location 01 as shown at 8, keys in a short code corresponding to the location, such as 01#. The mobile 6 then interrogates the SIM card 7 to retrieve the telephone number from the location. The SIM card 7 provides both the number and the alphanumeric tag giving the company's name and displays it to the subscriber. The user confirms that he wishes to proceed by pressing SEND.

Next, the mobile obtains a voice channel through which the call proceeds to the dialled number. The GSM system automatically handles intra-network and inter-network hops. At this point the subscriber can hold a voice conversation with the company.

Providing the correct equipment has been installed at the company, as soon as the call is answered, subscriber identity information read from the SIM card 7 gives the company immediate customer billing details such as a name and address.

The SIM card 7 also contains information detailing the subscriber's credit account. This information is held in a separate, secure memory location, accessible only when the subscriber enters a mandatory PIN number, known only to himself, thus confirming that the mobile has not been stolen or lost. When the subscriber has confirmed his car hire deal, he enters the PIN number

into the mobile 6, requesting the credit information from the SIM card 7. The SIM card 7 supplies the information and the mobile uses existing voice/data techniques to transmit the information to the company, in a format secure against detection by fraudsters. The sale is confirmed by the company or its equipment and the call is terminated.

In this example, it is also possible to obtain a telephone or fax number from the operator-assisted directory enquiries system without the subscriber having to manually enter the number into the communications terminal which he desires to use.

To use this feature, the subscriber calls network directory enquiries and gives the name of the person, company or service of which he wishes to ascertain the telephone number, as well as any additional information requested by the operator answering the call. The operator then locates the number, confirms it and enquires as to whether the number is to be transmitted verbally, transferred over SMS into a given memory location of the subscriber's SIM card or both.

If the subscriber chooses a SIM update, the voice call is terminated and the operator initiates the SMS process by entering a sequence into a computer or pressing a dedicated button. The telephone number is then encoded into an ECS message at the despatch centre and is posted across the network to the subscriber's communications terminal, which transmits a confirmation to the despatch centre. Thus the retry mechanism, which operates until such a confirmation is received, is suspended.

The communications terminal recognises the message as SMS data, passes it to the SIM card, and if capable, displays a "message received" banner. The SIM card in turn recognises the ECS using special hardware and software, and decodes it accordingly. The number, and any associated alphanumeric tag, which would normally consist of the name of the person or company, are recovered together with the memory location in which they are intended to be stored. The number and name-tag are then written to that location and are write-protected if requested by the subscriber, the overwrite protection being encoded into the message at source.

Subsequently, the subscriber attempts to place a call to the number in the known memory location by keying in the memory location number. The SIM card passes the telephone or fax number to the communications terminal on demand, and upon receipt of the subscriber's confirmation, the communications terminal sets up the call to the desired number.

Figure 3 shows the electronic structure of the SIM card 7. The card communicates with the mobile to which it is connected via an input/output (I/O) manager 15, preferably using the protocol ISO 7816 T=0. A filter 16 receives incoming data from the I/O manager and detects any ECS messages from among the short messages received. The ECS messages are sent directly to an electrically erasable read only memory (E²ROM) 17,

which is preferably a "flash" E²ROM. Data can also be output from the E²ROM directly to the I/O manager 15. The remaining blocks shown in figure 3 are standard components of a SIM card.

Figure 4 shows how the E²ROM is organised. A root directory 18 contains a SIM administration and identification 19, a GSM directory and network data 20, and a telecom directory 21.

The telecom directory in turn contains memory locations as follows: "abbreviated dial numbers" 22, "capability configuration" 23, "short messages" 24, "fixed dial numbers" 25, and "charging counter" 26. Each block represents a plurality of memory locations. The frequently dialled numbers and corresponding alphanumeric tags are stored at locations 22.

The "abbreviated dial numbers" locations 22 and the "short messages" locations 24 each have an associated locking control file 27, 28 respectively. The locking control files constitute means for read/write protecting and removing read/write protection from their associated memory locations. The locking control files 27, 28 will typically be in the telecom directory 21 as shown, however they can be located elsewhere such as in an administration directory.

Figure 5 is a flowchart illustrating the operation of the SIM card 7, which uses the specially fabricated hardware and software which has been described above to implement the operations illustrated. At lozenge 9, messages, requests, and instructions having ECS are distinguished from those without. Each of these ECS types consists of a data stream headed by a command which is one of at least four types: write commands for the messages, read commands for the requests for information, attribute commands for lock or unlock instructions and run commands for instructions to run a program.

The command and data types are decoded at box 10 and acted on in one of the four paths 11-14.

Path 11 handles the write commands to store messages starting at a location specified therein. Path 12 handles the read commands; again, the requests for information contain a location to be accessed first. Successive locations are read and the data stored in a buffer until the required amount of data has been read. The data in the buffer is then encoded into the ECS format and despatched from the mobile using SMS to the calling party.

In path 13, attribute commands are used to lock or unlock specified memory locations and render them accessible or inaccessible, either to calling parties or to the subscriber. In path 14, run commands cause a program stored in the SIM card to be run.

The basic ECS system is expandable to up to 255 internal shell commands of which write, read, lock/unlock and run are four examples. The specific protocol used for the transfer of information is not fixed and could be ISO7816 T=0 or any other suitable protocol.

The internal shell commands are a supplement to

the ability of the system to create external file objects within the SIM card 7. The file objects are of two types: Application Data File Programs (ADFP's) containing functional data which can be executed by the SIM card processor and can self modify if required and Application Data Files (ADF's) containing non-functional data which does not have these capabilities. Existing ADF(P)'s can be modified over-the-air enabling advanced facilities such as personalisation, re-personalisation or downloadable phone book.

The SIM card 7 has a directory structure, similar to that of a computer disk, and new ADF(P)'s can be downloaded into any directory over the air. Also over the air, directories can be created, deleted and modified, multiple tree directory operations can be carried out and ADF(P)'s that are no longer required can be deleted. The amount of ADF(P) data which can be downloaded is limited only by the size of the E²ROM memory of the card.

The invention, as described, greatly extends the applications of SIM cards. For example, using the Value Added Services Directory, subscribers can book hotels and airline seats over their mobiles quickly and easily.

An additional advantage of this feature of invention is that the geographical distribution of messages to cards in a specific area such as the South of France is facilitated. Thus advertisers can direct their messages to all mobile subscribers in the specific area. This is particularly useful when subscribers "roam" from one area to another and have no knowledge of local services.

The directory enquiries download enables contact telephone or fax numbers to be delivered to a subscriber's communications terminal without any intervention by the subscriber. The process of manually entering a number whilst engaged in a call to the operator is often dangerous, especially when the subscriber is driving.

The ability of the system to download ADF(P)'s means that additional services can be added to the SIM card over the air while maintaining total compatibility with the existing cellular system. Thus the SIM card could acquire the functions of a credit card, passport, driving licence, car park pass, membership card and so on, becoming a multiservice card. Also, dynamically updatable services can be added which require a different process to be run each time a service is accessed.

Once the card has extra services on it, it can be used outside of the mobile phone environment if desired as a standalone item. This can be read from or written to by a dedicated piece of hardware, such as a point of sale machine. If desired, the new services can be deleted, however the card will never lose its mobile phone SIM capability. In addition, if the card has extra services, they will continue to function even if the subscriber has been disconnected from the mobile phone network, unless otherwise desired.

Modifications are possible without departing from the scope of the invention.

For example, the SIM card can be trained only to receive messages detailing services relevant to the sub-

scriber's needs.

Claims

- 5 1. A telecommunications system comprising at least one host station (1) and a plurality of subscriber units (6), the or each host station being operable to transmit messages to the subscriber units, and each subscriber unit having a multiplicity of fixed memory locations (17) and means responsive to the detection of a message to store the message in a selected one of the fixed memory locations, which can be accessed from the subscriber unit when required, said memory locations being provided in an integrated circuit card or other module (7) which is removably connected to the subscriber unit, characterised in that the or each host station is adapted to transmit a message coded in a specific format distinguished from other message formats used in the system, and in that the module (7) has means (16,9) for distinguishing the message coded in said specific format from said other message formats, means (10) for decoding and storing said message in a selected fixed memory location (17), and reading means (12) operable in response to the decoded message to instigate an action to be taken by the associated subscriber unit.
- 10 2. A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the module (7) includes means adapted to transmit a message coded in the specific format to the associated subscriber unit.
- 15 3. A system as claimed in claim 2, wherein each subscriber unit comprises means arranged to receive said message from the associated module and to present information from the message to the user of the subscriber unit or to transmit said message to at least one of the host stations.
- 20 4. A system as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the message in said specific format transmitted by a host station comprises information to be stored in the module (7), a request for information stored in the module and/or an instruction to execute a program stored in the module, and the module includes means (10) for distinguishing between a message comprising information to be stored, a request for information and an instruction.
- 25 5. A system as claimed in claim 4, wherein said message transmitted from the host station comprises a request for information stored in a secure memory location of the module (7), said module being responsive to a personal identification signal entered in the subscriber unit by the subscriber to render the secure location accessible to the request transmit-
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- ted from the host station.
6. A system as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the message is coded in a secure format.
 7. A system as claimed in claim 6, wherein the secure format is in the form of an Embedded Command Stream which comprises a data stream headed by a command.
 8. A system as claimed in claim 7, wherein the message is headed by a write command and the module is responsive to such a command to store the accompanying message in a fixed location specified by the command.
 9. A system as claimed in claim 7 or 8, wherein the message is headed by a read command and the module is responsive to such a command to read information from a fixed memory location as specified by the command.
 10. A system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the information is read from successive locations, is stored, coded in the specified format and, thereafter, transmitted from the module.
 11. A system as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the module (7) includes locking control means (27,28) for selectively protecting fixed memory locations from reading and/or overwriting by the subscriber unit or the host station.
 12. A system as claimed in claim 11, wherein the message includes an attribute command and the locking control means of the module is responsive to the attribute command to lock or unlock the associated fixed memory locations so as selectively to provide read and/or write protection.
 13. A system as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the or each host station is operable to transmit another message coded in the specific format so as to overwrite an earlier message stored in the fixed memory location(s) at a subscriber unit.
 14. A module (7) for controlling a subscriber unit (6) in a telecommunications system comprising at least one host station (1), said module being removably connectable to a transceiver of the subscriber unit and having a multiplicity of fixed memory locations (17), and means responsive to the detection of a message transmitted from a host station to store the message in a selected one of the fixed memory locations, characterised by means for distinguishing a message coded in a specific format from other message formats used in the system, means for decoding and storing said message in a selected fixed

memory location (17), and reading means (12) operable in response to the decoded message to instigate an action to be taken by the associated subscriber unit.

15. A module as claimed in claim 14, including means adapted to transmit a message coded in the specific format to the associated subscriber unit.
16. A module as claimed in claim 14 or 15, including means for distinguishing between, in messages coded in the specific format, a message comprising information to be stored, a request for information stored in the module and/or an instruction to execute a programme stored in the module.
17. A module as claimed in claim 16, including means responsive to a personal identification signal entered in the associated subscriber unit by the subscriber to render a secure memory location of the module accessible to a request for information transmitted from a host station.
18. A module as claimed in claim 16 or 17, including means responsive to said instruction for executing a programme stored in the module.
19. A module as claimed in any preceding claim, including locking control means (27,28) for selectively protecting fixed memory locations from reading and/or overwriting by the associated subscriber unit or a host station.
20. A module as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein each memory location is associated with a simple, short code and includes means responsive for the entry of the relevant code to retrieve data from the associated memory location.
21. A module as claimed in any preceding claim, including a directory structure (21) within which files can be stored.
22. A module as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the module is in the form of an integrated circuit card (7).

Patentansprüche

1. Telekommunikationssystem, umfassend wenigstens eine Hoststation (1) und eine Mehrzahl von Teilnehmereinheiten (6), wobei die oder jede Hoststation Nachrichten zu den Teilnehmereinheiten überträgt und jede Teilnehmereinheit eine Vielzahl von festen Speicherorten (17) und ein Mittel aufweist, das auf die Erfassung einer Nachricht reagiert, indem es die Nachricht an einem ausgewähl-

- ten der festen Speicherorte speichert, auf die bei Bedarf von der Teilnehmereinheit zugegriffen werden kann, wobei sich die genannten Speicherorte in einer integrierten Schaltungskarte oder einem anderen Modul (7) befinden, die/das abtrennbar mit der Teilnehmereinheit verbunden ist, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die oder jede Hoststation die Aufgabe hat/haben, eine Nachricht, die in einem bestimmten Format codiert ist, das sich von anderen in dem System verwendeten Nachrichtenformaten unterscheidet, zu übertragen, und dadurch, daß das Modul (7) ein Mittel (16, 9) aufweist, um die in dem genannten bestimmten Format codierte Nachricht von genannten anderen Nachrichtenformaten zu unterscheiden, ein Mittel (10) zum Decodieren und Speichern der genannten Nachricht an einem ausgewählten festen Speicherort (17), und ein Lesemittel (12), das in Reaktion auf die decodierte Nachricht eine Tätigkeit veranlaßt, die von der zugehörigen Teilnehmereinheit durchzuführen ist.
2. System nach Anspruch 1, bei dem das Modul (7) ein Mittel aufweist, um eine Nachricht, die in dem bestimmten Format codiert ist, zu der zugehörigen Teilnehmereinheit zu übertragen.
 3. System nach Anspruch 2, bei dem jede Teilnehmereinheit ein Mittel umfaßt, das die Aufgabe hat, die genannte Nachricht von dem zugehörigen Modul zu empfangen und Informationen aus der Nachricht dem Benutzer der Teilnehmereinheit zu präsentieren oder die genannte Nachricht zu wenigstens einer der Hoststationen zu senden.
 4. System nach einem der vorherigen Ansprüche, bei dem die Nachricht in dem genannten bestimmten Format, die von einer Hoststation gesendet wurde, Informationen, die in dem Modul (7) gespeichert werden sollen, eine Anforderung nach Informationen, die in dem Modul gespeichert sind, und/oder einen Befehl zum Ausführen eines in dem Modul gespeicherten Programms umfaßt, und das Modul ein Mittel (10) zum Unterscheiden zwischen einer zu speichernden Informationen enthaltenden Nachricht, einer Anforderung nach Informationen und einem Befehl aufweist.
 5. System nach Anspruch 4, bei dem die genannte, von der Hoststation gesendete Nachricht eine Anforderung nach Informationen umfaßt, die an einem sicheren Speicherort des Moduls (7) gespeichert sind, wobei das genannte Modul auf ein persönliches Kennsignal reagiert, das von dem Teilnehmer in die Teilnehmereinheit eingegeben wurde, um den sicheren Ort für die von der Hoststation gesendete Anforderung zugänglich zu machen.
 6. System nach einem der vorherigen Ansprüche, bei dem die Nachricht in einem sicheren Format codiert ist.
 7. System nach Anspruch 6, bei dem das sichere Format die Form eines eingebetteten Befehlsstroms (Embedded Command Stream) hat, der einen von einem Befehl angeführten Datenstrom umfaßt.
 8. System nach Anspruch 7, bei dem die Nachricht von einem Schreibbefehl angeführt wird und das Modul auf einen solchen Befehl reagiert, indem es die begleitende Nachricht an einem durch den Befehl vorgegebenen festen Ort speichert.
 9. System nach Anspruch 7 oder 8, bei dem die Nachricht von einem Lesebefehl angeführt wird und das Modul auf einen solchen Befehl damit reagiert, daß es Informationen von einem festen Speicherort gemäß Vorgabe durch den Befehl liest.
 10. System nach Anspruch 9, bei dem die Informationen von aufeinanderfolgenden Orten gelesen, gespeichert, in dem vorgegebenen Format codiert und danach von dem Modul abgesendet werden.
 11. System nach einem der vorherigen Ansprüche, bei dem das Modul (7) Sperrsteuermittel (27, 28) zum selektiven Schützen fester Speicherorte vor dem Lesen und/oder Überschreiben durch die Teilnehmereinheit oder die Hoststation beinhaltet.
 12. System nach Anspruch 11, bei dem die Nachricht einen Attributbefehl beinhaltet und das Sperrsteuermittel des Moduls auf den Attributbefehl reagiert, indem es die zugehörigen festen Speicherorte sperrt oder freigibt, um selektiv Lese- und/oder Schreibschutz bereitzustellen.
 13. System nach einem der vorherigen Ansprüche, bei dem die oder jede Hoststation die Aufgabe hat, eine andere in dem bestimmten Format codierte Nachricht zu übertragen, um eine frühere Nachricht, die an dem/den festen Speicherort(en) an einer Teilnehmereinheit gespeichert ist, zu überschreiben.
 14. Modul (7) zum Steuern einer Teilnehmereinheit (6) in einem Telekommunikationssystem, umfassend wenigstens eine Hoststation (1), wobei das genannte Modul abtrennbar mit einem Sender/Empfänger der Teilnehmereinheit verbunden werden kann und eine Vielzahl von festen Speicherorten (17) aufweist, und ein Mittel, das auf die Erfassung einer von einer Hoststation gesendeten Nachricht reagiert, indem es die Nachricht an einem ausgewählten der festen Speicherorte speichert, gekennzeichnet durch ein Mittel zum Unterscheiden einer in einem bestimmten Format codierten Nachricht von anderen in dem System verwendeten Nach-

richtenformaten, ein Mittel zum Decodieren und Speichern der genannten Nachricht an einem ausgewählten festen Speicherort (17) und ein Lesemittel (12), das die Aufgabe hat, auf die decodierte Nachricht zu reagieren, indem es eine Tätigkeit veranlaßt, die von der zugehörigen Teilnehmereinheit durchzuführen ist.

15. Modul nach Anspruch 14, mit einem Mittel zum Übertragen einer in dem bestimmten Format codierten Nachricht zu der zugehörigen Teilnehmereinheit.

16. Modul nach Anspruch 14 oder 15, mit einem Mittel, um in Nachrichten, die in dem bestimmten Format codiert sind, zwischen Nachrichten, die zu speichernde Informationen enthalten, einer Anforderung nach in dem Modul gespeicherten Informationen und/oder einem Befehl zum Ausführen eines in dem Modul gespeicherten Programms zu unterscheiden.

17. Modul nach Anspruch 16, mit einem Mittel, das auf ein persönliches Kennsignal, das vom Teilnehmer in die zugehörige Teilnehmereinheit eingegeben wurde, reagiert, indem es einen sicheren Speicherort des Moduls für eine von einer Hoststation gesendete Informationsanforderung zugänglich macht.

18. Modul nach Anspruch 16 oder 17, mit einem Mittel, das auf den genannten Befehl zum Ausführen eines in dem Modul gespeicherten Programms reagiert.

19. Modul nach einem der vorherigen Ansprüche, mit einem Sperrsteuermittel (27, 28) zum selektiven Schützen fester Speicherorte vor Lesen und/oder Überschreiben durch die zugehörige Teilnehmereinheit oder eine Hoststation.

20. Modul nach einem der vorherigen Ansprüche, bei dem jeder Speicherort mit einem einfachen, kurzen Code assoziiert ist und ein Mittel beinhaltet, das auf die Eingabe des relevanten Codes reagiert, indem es Daten von dem zugehörigen Speicherort einliest.

21. Modul nach einem der vorherigen Ansprüche mit einer Verzeichnisstruktur (21), in der Dateien gespeichert werden können.

22. Modul nach einem der vorherigen Ansprüche, bei dem das Modul die Form einer integrierten Schaltungskarte (7) hat.

Revendications

1. Un système de télécommunications qui comprend

au moins une station principale (1) et une pluralité d'unités d'abonné (6), la station centrale ou chacune des stations centrales étant utilisable pour transmettre des messages aux unités d'abonné, et chaque unité d'abonné possédant une multiplicité d'emplacements (17) en mémoire fixe et des moyens qui répondent à la détection d'un message pour stocker le message dans un emplacement sélectionné parmi les emplacements en mémoire fixe, qui peuvent être sollicités par l'unité d'abonné selon les besoins, lesdits emplacements en mémoire fixe étant fournis sur une carte de circuits intégrés ou autre module (7) connecté de manière amovible à l'unité d'abonné, caractérisé en ce que la station principale ou chaque station principale est adaptée pour transmettre un message codé selon un format spécifique distingué des autres formats de message utilisés dans le système, et en ce que le module (7) est doté de moyens (16,9) de distinguer le message codé selon ledit format spécifique parmi lesdits autres formats de message, un moyen (10) de décodage et de stockage du dit message dans un emplacement en mémoire fixe (17), et un moyen de lecture (12) utilisable en réponse au message décodé pour susciter une action de la part de l'unité d'abonné associée.

2. Un système selon la revendication 1, dans lequel le module (7) inclut un moyen adapté pour transmettre, à l'unité d'abonné associée, un message codé selon le format spécifique.

3. Un système selon la revendication 2, dans lequel chaque unité d'abonné comprend des moyens configurés pour recevoir ledit message provenant du module associé et pour présenter l'information du message à l'utilisateur de l'unité d'abonné ou pour transmettre ledit message à l'une au moins des stations centrales.

4. Un système selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel le message codé selon ledit format spécifique transmis par une station centrale comprend des informations à stocker dans le module (7), une demande d'information stockée dans le module et/ou une instruction d'exécution d'un programme stocké dans le module, et le module inclut un moyen (10) de distinguer entre un message qui contient des informations à stocker, une demande d'information et une instruction.

5. Un système selon la revendication 4, dans lequel ledit message transmis par la station centrale comporte une demande d'information stockée dans un emplacement sécurisé du module (7), le dit module réagissant à un signal d'identification personnel entré par l'abonné dans l'unité d'abonné pour rendre l'emplacement sécurisé accessible à la requête

transmise par la station centrale.

6. Un système selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel le message est codé selon un format sécurisé. 5
7. Un système selon la revendication 6, dans lequel le format sécurisé revêt la forme d'une chaîne de commande intégrée qui comprend une chaîne de données débutant par une commande. 10
8. Un système selon la revendication 7, dans lequel le message débute par une commande de lecture, et le module réagit à cette commande pour lire l'information à partir d'un emplacement en mémoire fixe, qui est spécifié par la commande. 15
9. Un système selon la revendication 7 ou 8, dans lequel le message débute par une commande de lecture et le module réagit à cette commande pour lire l'information à partir d'un emplacement en mémoire fixe spécifié par la commande. 20
10. Un système selon la revendication 9, dans lequel l'information est lue à partir d'emplacements successifs, est stockée, est codée selon le format spécifique et est ensuite transmise par le module. 25
11. Un système selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel le module (7) inclut des moyens de commande de verrouillage (27, 28) pour protéger sélectivement les emplacements en mémoire fixe contre la lecture et/ou le recouvrement par l'unité d'abonné ou la station centrale. 30
12. Un système selon la revendication 11, dans lequel le message inclut une commande d'attribut et le moyen de commande de verrouillage du module réagit à la commande d'attribut pour verrouiller ou déverrouiller les emplacements associés en mémoire fixe de manière à assurer sélectivement la protection en lecture et/ou en écriture. 35
13. Un système selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel la station centrale ou chacune de celles-ci peut être utilisée pour transmettre un autre message codé selon le format spécifique pour recouvrir un message précédemment stocké dans le ou les emplacement(s) en mémoire fixe au niveau d'une unité d'abonné. 40
14. Un module (7) pour contrôler une unité d'abonné (6) dans un système de télécommunications qui comprend au moins une station centrale (1), ledit module étant connecté de manière amovible à un émetteur-récepteur de l'unité d'abonné et possédant une multiplicité d'emplacements (17) en mémoire fixe, et un moyen qui réagit à la détection d'un 45

message transmis par une station centrale pour stocker le message dans un emplacement sélectionné parmi les emplacements en mémoire fixe, caractérisé par un moyen de distinguer un message codé selon un format spécifique par rapport à d'autres formats de message utilisés dans le système, des moyens de décodage et de stockage du dit message dans un emplacement (17) en mémoire fixe sélectionné, et un moyen de lecture (12) qui peut être utilisé en réponse au message décodé pour susciter une action de la part de l'unité d'abonné associée.

15. Un module selon la revendication 14, qui inclut un moyen adapté pour transmettre, à l'unité d'abonné associée, un message codé selon le format spécifique. 50
16. Un module selon la revendication 14 ou 15, qui inclut un moyen de distinguer, dans des messages codés selon le format spécifique, entre un message qui contient des informations à stocker, une demande d'information stockée dans le module et/ou une instruction d'exécution d'un programme stocké dans le module. 55
17. Un module selon la revendication 16, qui inclut un moyen qui réagit à un signal d'identification personnelle entré par l'abonné dans l'unité d'abonné associée pour rendre accessible à une requête d'information transmise à partir d'une station centrale un emplacement sécurisé dans la mémoire du module.
18. Un module selon la revendication 16 ou 17, qui inclut un moyen qui réagit à ladite instruction d'exécution d'un programme stocké dans le module.
19. Un module selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, qui inclut des moyens de commande de verrouillage (27, 28) pour protéger sélectivement des emplacements en mémoire fixe contre la lecture et/ou le recouvrement par l'unité d'abonné associée ou par une station centrale.
20. Un module selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel chaque emplacement en mémoire est associé à un code simple et court et inclut un moyen qui réagit à l'entrée du code pertinent pour récupérer des données à partir de l'emplacement en mémoire associé.
21. Un module selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, qui inclut une structure de répertoires (21) dans laquelle des fichiers peuvent être stockés.
22. Un module selon l'une quelconque des revendica-

tions précédentes, dans lequel le module revêt la
form d'une carte de circuits intégrés (7).

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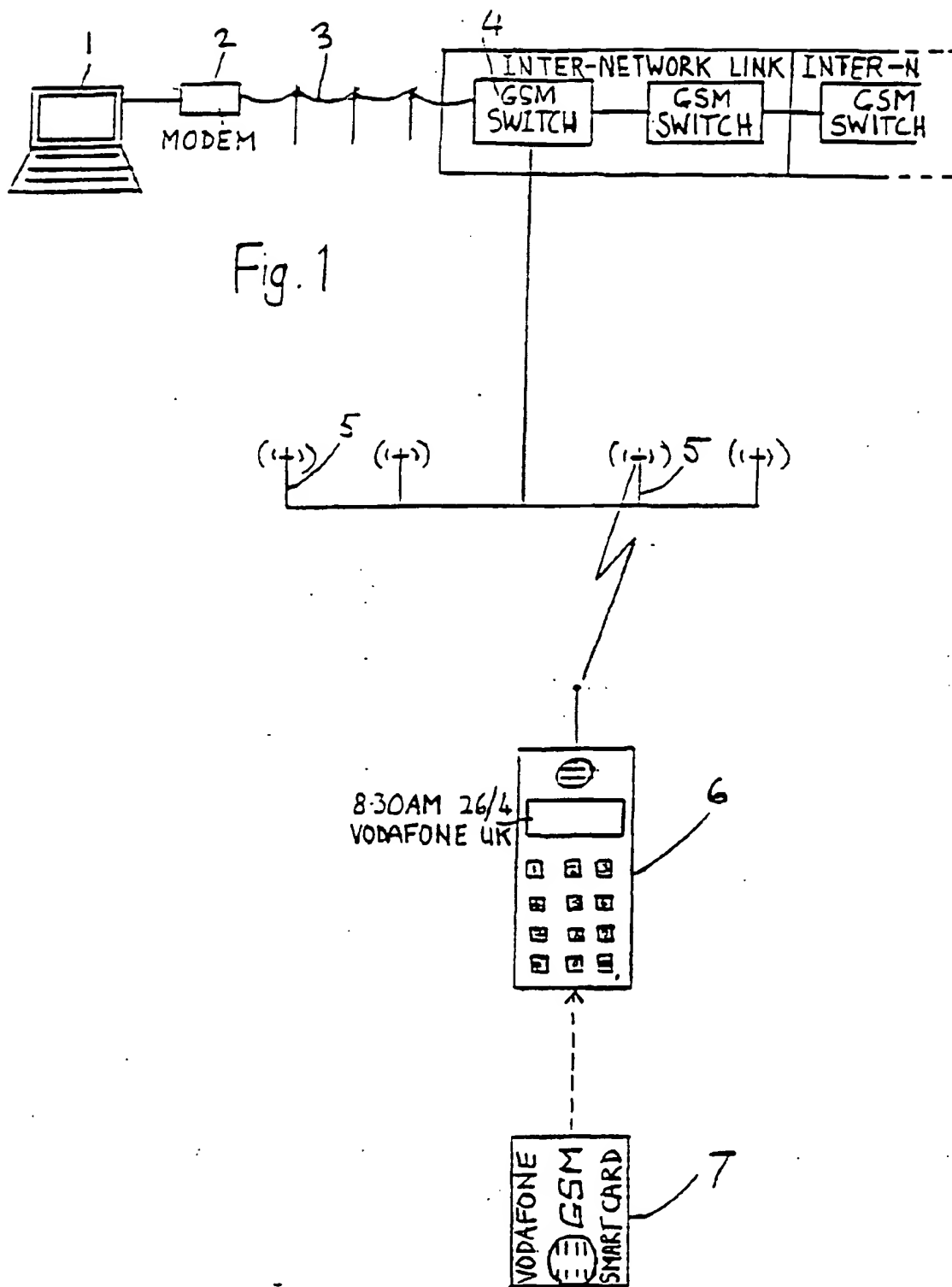


Fig. 1

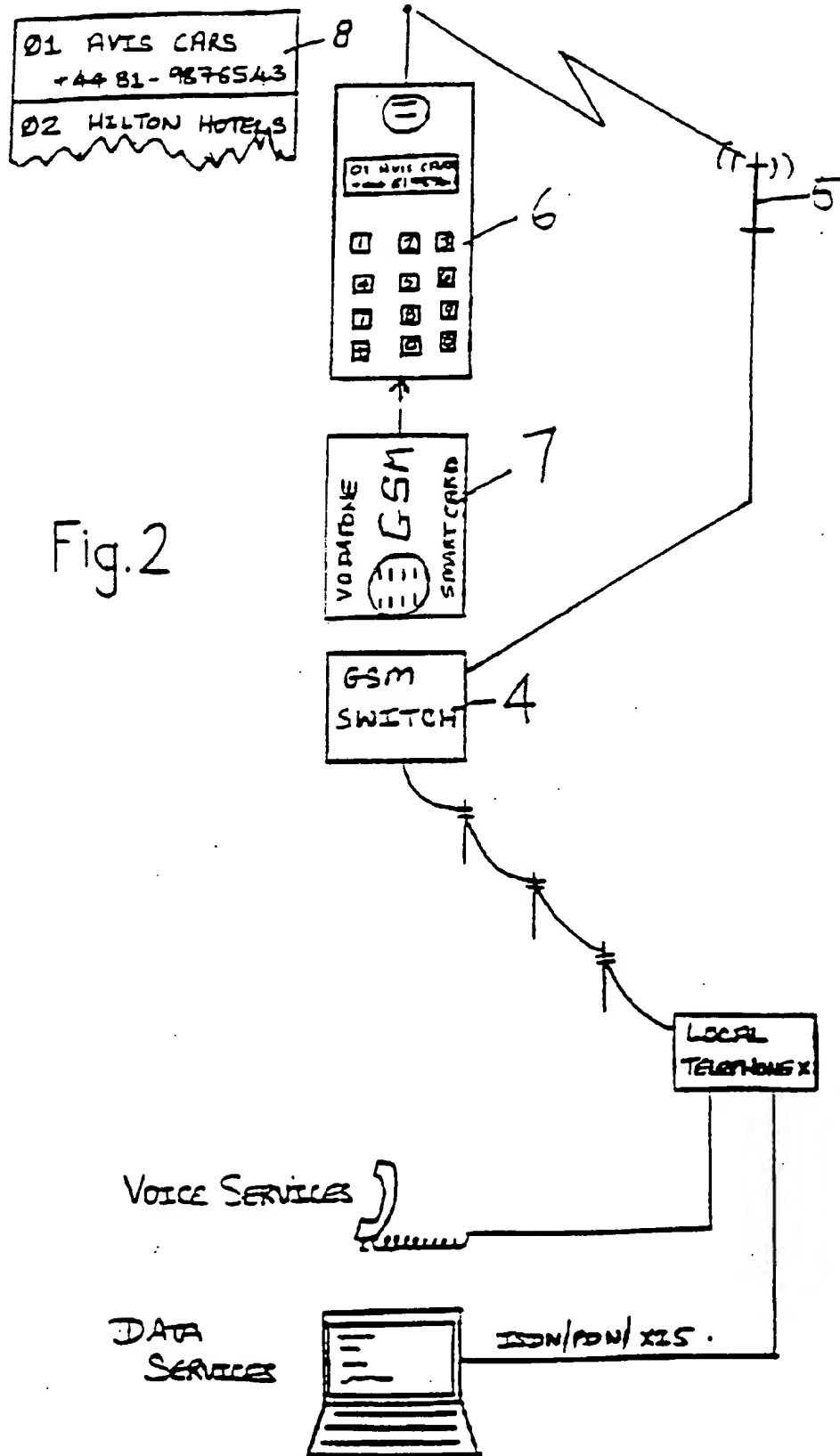


Fig. 3

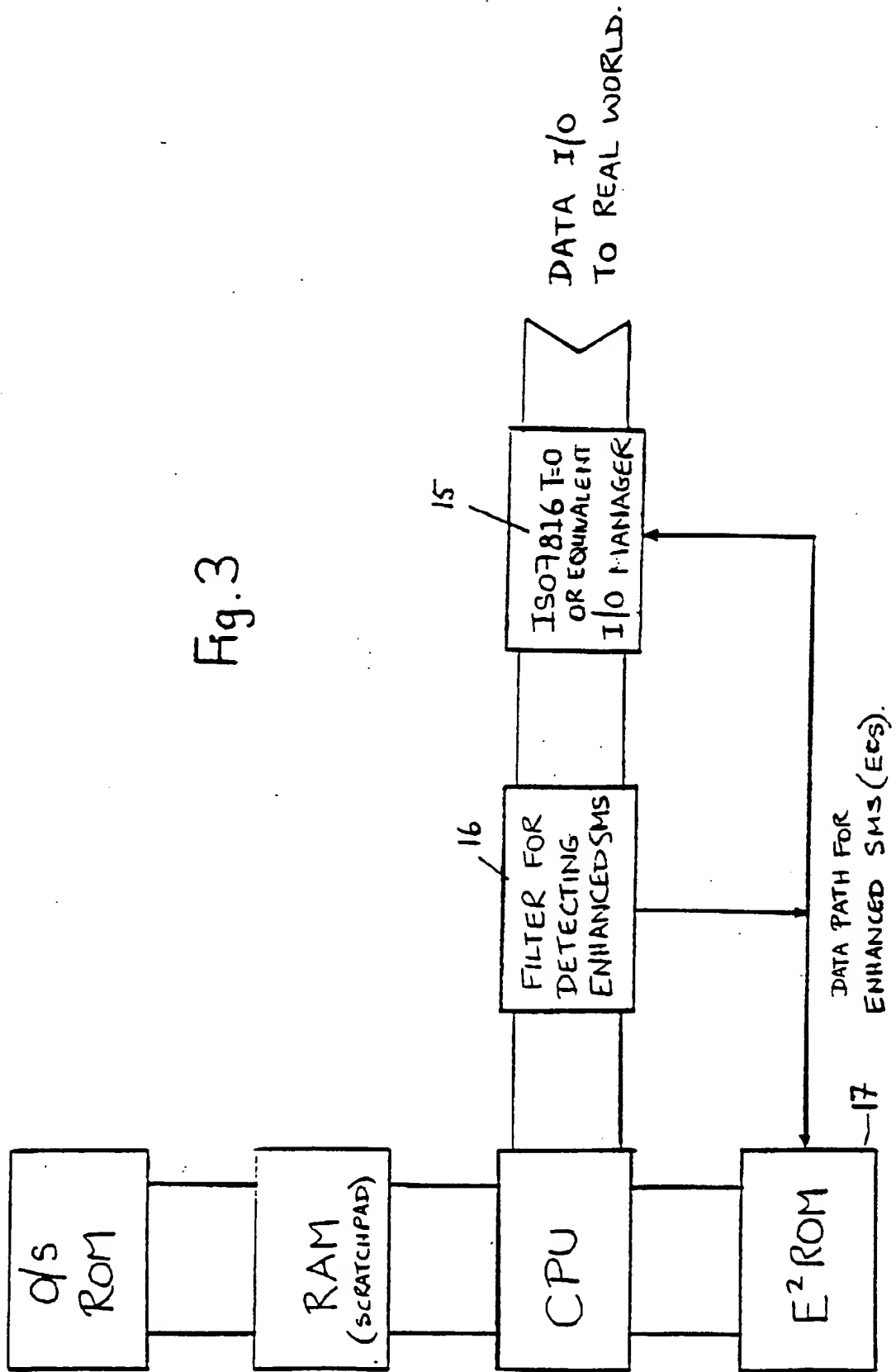
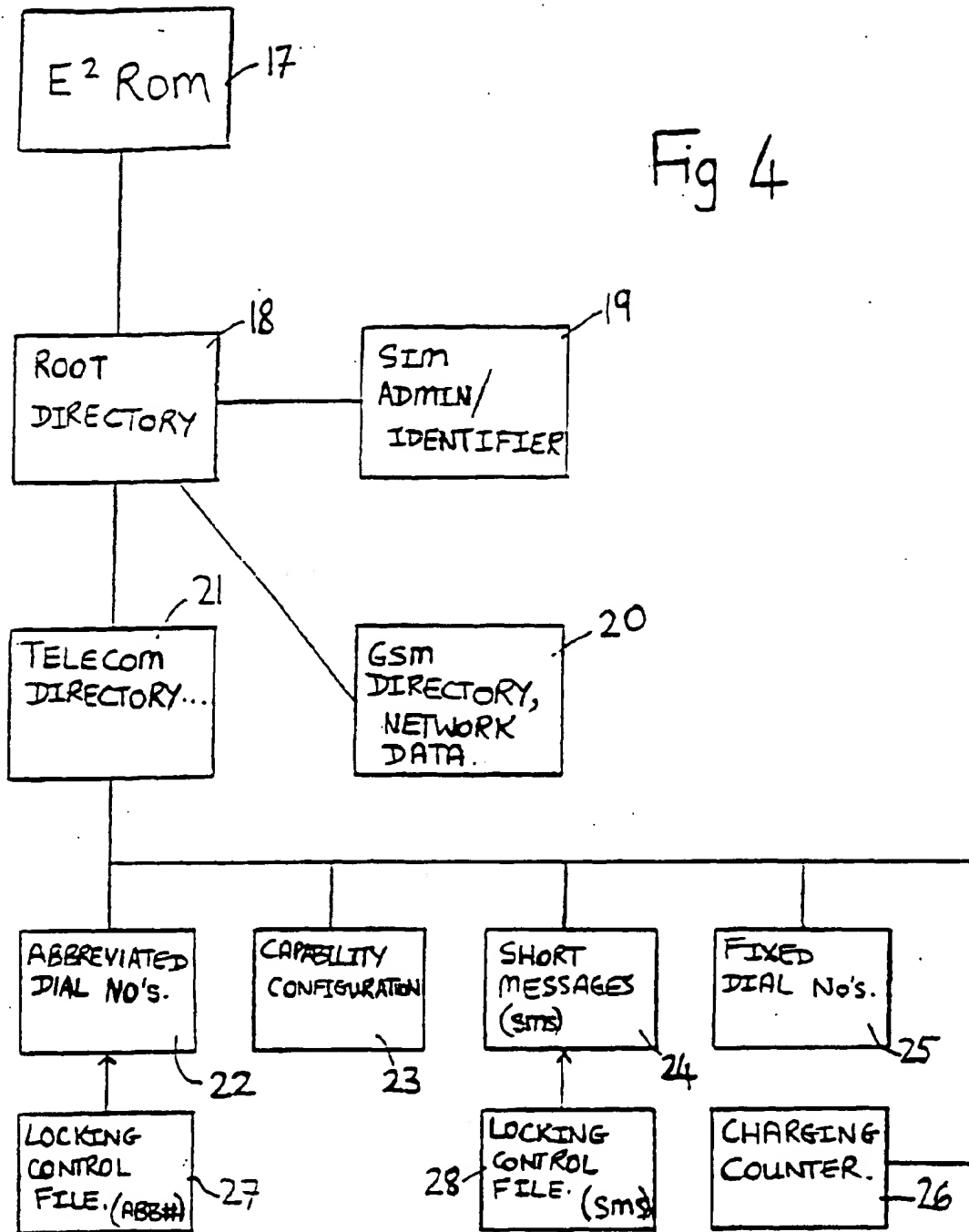


Fig 4



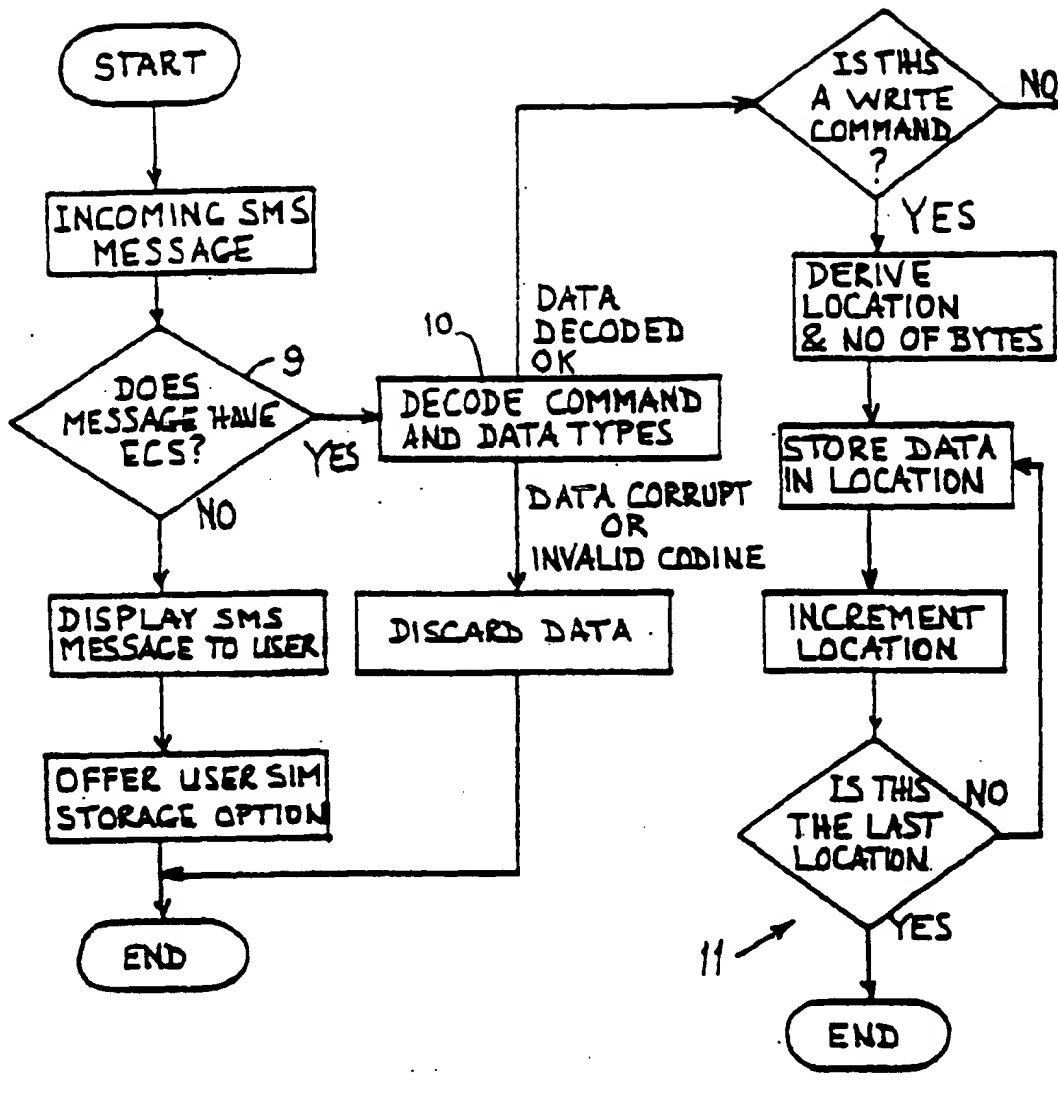


Fig.5

